

OLD CAMBERWELL

BY

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III.—TOPOGRAPHICAL.

COLDHARBOUR LANE is a sinuous and evidently ancient highway. The name, it is generally agreed, meant a place of shelter, and as such coldharbours are of more ancient origin than our oldest inns or hostelries. Here the name came to be applied to the manor; but it also continued to attach to a house or inn which abutted on the northern side of the roadway, towards the eastern or Camberwell end of the Lane. A drawing, preserved in the Central Library of the borough, shows this to be a house of probably sixteenth century date, with tall, well-designed chimneys, and hard by was an old thatched farmhouse with many out-buildings, called Whiting's Farm. Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII's Chancellor, is said to have owned this house, and to have bred cocks for fighting here.

Going westward, a road went in a northerly direction, between old houses and cottages set in woods or orchards, to Loughborough House, a large mansion, built by Lord Loughborough early in the seventeenth century, having another approach from Brixton Causeway, and outside the bounds of the parish of Camberwell.* It was pulled down about 1865.

Either Whiting's Farm or the principal house in the

* It is described in an advertisement in the *London Mercury*, April 10, 1682, as "near Hazard's bridge, on the road to Croydon." This was a bridge over the little river Effra, bordering and crossing Brixton Causeway. The bridge is gone, and the stream is now a sewer.

wood was the original mansion-house of this manor of Coldharbour, and as such the residence of the Bowyers, until by purchase they had come into possession of Edgar Scott's one-fifth of the manor of Camberwell, when John Scott's heir, Sir Edmund Bowyer, built a large house on the western side of Camberwell Road, pulled down for the making of the Chatham and Dover Railway in 1861. If any relics of it remain, they are in the hands of the Bowyer-Smijth family. It was a house of at least two dates, on a site occupied by a still older house or houses. Down to the early part of the nineteenth century its northern front—which was coated with plaster, perhaps concealing a half-timbered construction—retained a pair of double-storied bay windows with canted angles, each storey having wooden mullioned windows of seven lights in two tiers, filled with diamond glazing. These or others of the windows at one time possessed elaborate coats-of-arms of the Bowyers and allied families, with heraldic mantlings in stained glass.

But the principal, or southern, front of the house, with its eastern and western sides, as rendered in old engravings, show that the structure was rebuilt in the grandiose and formal style of Charles II's reign. Tradition, in fact, ascribes its rebuilding to Sir Christopher Wren, to whom other vanished houses of Camberwell are assigned; but, at any rate, it was probably to the earlier Bowyer House that Evelyn came on September 1, 1657, to visit "Sir Edmund Bowyer, at his melancholic seat at Camerwell." The diarist records here "a very pretty grove of oakes, and hedges of yew in his garden, and a handsome row of tall elmes before his court." In its later history a tall cedar graced the forecourt, similar to the giant that still survives on the eastern side of Lower Denmark Hill; but Evelyn, the author of "*Sylva*," who was the Sir John Paxton of his day, and gave practical advice to his friends in all matters of landscape garden-

ing, would not have failed to record so rare a tree had it been in existence in 1657. Tradition in the early part of last century linked it with Queen Elizabeth, but with still less probability. Perhaps the Queen halted here in one of her many progresses, such as on the occasion of her visit to the Oak of Honour, or One Tree Hill. A letter is preserved from the Queen, addressed "To my good friende Sir Anthony Aucher, Kt.," relating to some silver or gold plate, as to which he had transacted business for his royal mistress. He came of an old Kentish family, settled at Bourne, and his son, another Sir Anthony, had a daughter, Hester, or Esther, who married Sir Edmund Bowyer. This lady was of extraordinary beauty, as well as of rare virtue and excellent parts, and was known, in allusion to her name, as "the Star of the East." As recorded on her monument in the old church, she died on December 10, 1665. One thinks of this lovely lady as one reads the description of the vanished abode that she brightened by her presence. Some of its rooms were very richly fitted and furnished. The walls and ceiling of the entrance-hall were ornamented with curious carved and moulded work, which latterly was disfigured by tawdry painting. Against one wall was a portrait of a lady, traditionally ascribed to Dame Hester Bowyer; and in the room over it was a companion picture of her husband, with the Bowyer crest over it carved in oak.

In the northern wing was a small room known as the cedar parlour, ornamented with festoons of fruit and flowers in high relief and carved with great freedom and taste; but whether the room was so called from the old cedar-tree, or, more probably, from its panelling being of cedar-wood, appears uncertain. Over the chimney-piece was a small but fine piece of painting, the subject being Saturn devouring his children, with a background of ruins. Adjoining this was a large and handsome room, lofty and well-proportioned. The chimney-piece was

flanked by finely carved swags of fruit and flowers, masterly specimens of the woodcarver's art. Above the fireplace was a painting of various birds, and a chained mastiff rushing at them, whilst above in the air was the fabled footless fowl of classical mythology. On the southern and eastern sides of this noble room were other huge paintings, ascribed to Sir James Thornhill—Apollo, nimbed, accompanied by the crow, was the principal figure in both. In the corresponding room on the south side, lions' heads were carved on the angles of the chimney-piece; and, in a small anteroom adjoining, the walls were covered with hangings of embossed and painted leather. Who can say whether these or other relics of this richly ornamented mansion survived its unhappy destruction?

The southern front which faced towards the London Road (now called Camberwell Road) had a recessed centre, two lofty storeys high, with the entrance doorway, crowned by a circular pediment in the middle, surmounted by a large sash-window heavily framed: this was flanked by similar but narrower windows; and in the projecting wings, which were finished by a parapet, these windows were set forward like bays. The central part of the house had a high-pitched roof behind the parapet, with dormers to light the attics, and may have been part of the older house to which belonged the Elizabethan bay windows of the north front.

Tradition asserts that Sir Christopher Wren resided here while St. Paul's was being rebuilt, and that some of the paintings above described were the work of Sir James Thornhill. James II is said to have been concealed in the house for some time before his escape to France. It is doubtful, however, whether both traditions have not confused Bowyer House with (1) another ancient mansion, which stood on the southern side of Camberwell Green, and was known as "the old house on the Green," pulled

down about 1850; and (2) the house of Sir Thomas Bond, subsequently in the possession of the *Shard* family, the site of which is now marked by Hill Street, Peckham.

“The old house on the Green” had a long plastered front facing north, somewhat formally designed, with rows of two-light mullioned and transomed windows to both storeys, originally filled with oblong leaded panes. It had a low-pitched pediment in the centre in front of the slated roof, and in this pediment was a carved trophy of arms and armour. It also was ornamented with fine paneling, chimney-pieces, and paintings ascribed to Thornhill; and legends attached to it, relating to the cruel murder of a wife by her husband, who subsequently committed suicide after seeing her reproachful ghost. Following upon its demolition, a road called Wren Road, after the famous architect, whose traditional occupancy was connected with the house, was cut through the site, which is now covered with small houses and a Congregational chapel. Opposite was a large pond on the edge of the Green, shaded by a weeping willow of great size. Adjoining the old house were one or two other antique and rural structures, at the beginning of Church Street, with verandahs and balconies, which I remember as still existing in 1876. Church Street was then bordered on both sides by rows of low two-storied brick houses of eighteenth century date, pulled down, with one exception, in about 1880.

Farther along, on the south side of Church Street, near to St. Giles's, is an early eighteenth century house which has once been of some importance. It has a front of brown stocks, with red brick dressings, narrow sash windows, and a handsome wooden doorcase with capitals of peculiar carved foliage. The original door, staircase, and other wood fittings remain to attest its better days, though the house has long sunk to the state of a common lodging-house. Continuing eastwards, there is a long terrace of fine old brown brick houses, also on the south side, dated by a

stone tablet 1774. Between these and St. Giles's Church is the modern Grammar School, founded by the Rev. Edward Wiison, Vicar of Camberwell, in 1615. This eccentric, anticipating the more famous founder of the College of God's Gift at Dulwich, directed that all succeeding headmasters were to bear his own patronymic—a condition more honoured in the breach than in the observance. The homely school buildings of Jacobean date, gabled, plaster-fronted, and tile-roofed, survived for a year or two the fire of 1841, which destroyed the church, and their memory is kept green by many eighteenth and nineteenth century prints. They abutted hard upon the eastern boundary of the churchyard, and in the garden were many fine old elms.

The old Mill of Camberwell was close to the north-west boundary of the parish, in what is now called Camberwell Road. Camberwell New Road from Kennington Church to Camberwell Green was cut through the fields in about 1820.

In East Dulwich, now a densely populated district of new houses, the Scotts had another house, built in the sixteenth century or earlier, and demolished about 1800. It stood on East Dulwich Common, and was built of red bricks, but no picture of it has come down to us.

The Muschamp family, whose chapel and memorials were once so prominent in the old church, lived in the manor-house near Peckham High Street, on land which is now intersected by the Surrey Canal. It was a very ancient and important house even in Henry VIII's reign, when we find this family in possession, as it is described in 1307 as a capital messuage, valued at a lawyer's fee. Sir Thomas Bond, who was a Roman Catholic, purchased the property in Charles II's reign, pulled down the house, and built a great mansion on its site, which is described by his friend Evelyn, who repeatedly visited him here, as a "new and fine house by Peckham," standing "on a

flat, but has a fine garden and prospect through the meadows to London." The date 1672 was on the weather-cock of the house. It had a handsome north frontage, approached under a canopy of stately elms, "at the end of which was a beautiful prospect terminated by a view of Saint Paul's and the Tower of London. The beauties of this prospect were greatly increased by the masts of ships being seen over the trees as far as Greenwich." The gardens were famous for their beauty and for the choice fruit-trees from France, tended by a Parisian gardener of great experience. Part was devoted to an artificial "wilderness." The house seems to have been as sumptuously laid out and furnished as the grounds, with a noble staircase, paintings on walls and ceilings, and much fine carved work in mantel-pieces and panelling. Sir Thomas Bond, remaining faithful to his friend and master James II, followed him on his exile; and a mob sacked the house and did much damage. In a letter, of which an extract has been kindly given me by Mr. W. Isaac Shard, written to his father in 1864, the writer, a kinsman, speaks of "a large oak-panelled room with a painted ceiling. . . . The large building was occupied by the two brothers (William and Charles Shard) and the two sisters Harriet and Sophia. Each had their separate establishment. The sisters lived in the two wings. The centre was occupied by the brothers. But they only lived there on sufferance, as the place belonged to my father; and on his brother Charles marrying against his express wish, he was not permitted to reside there again. . . ."*

* The Shards came into possession of this old house before the middle of the eighteenth century. Sir Isaac Pacatus Shard, F.R.S., inherited from Mrs. Hill, who had purchased the estate in 1731 from Lord Trevor, to whom it had passed, also by purchase, from Sir Henry Bond, son of the re-builder, Sir Thomas Bond. The house was pulled down in 1797, and all the beautiful shrubs and trees destroyed; but there is, or was until lately, embedded in a labyrinth of small houses, the seventeenth century lodge.

Another ancient house in Peckham, demolished only about the beginning of the present century to make way for tram stables, was Basing Manor-house, of very ancient origin, and retaining to the last its Jacobean gables, and bay windows, old chimney stacks, and plaster-faced half-timber construction. Here lived, in the early part of the seventeenth century, the old family of Gardiner, connected by marriage with the Scotts of Camberwell. Hereabouts also, but where I have failed to locate, the Mainwarings, or Manwarings, collateral ancestors of my own, had a house for a short time in the seventeenth century. In the Burials Register of St. Giles's we have, "1653, May 15, Sir Henry Manwaring." The connection between Sir Henry Mainwaring and the Gardiners is not generally known.

The Gardiners, or Gardyners, came to Peckham from Bermondsey in Elizabeth's reign. William Gardyner, of Bermondsey, purchased Basing Manor from "one Edward Newport, gent., and Richard Baker, gent., both of Camberwell"; and among the Chancery Bills and Answers in the Public Record Office (G. 9, 1, No. 48) is recorded an action brought by "Wm. Gardyner of Barmondsey against Thomas Newman and John Thompson, scriveners, of London, for obtaining money more than due, for writing certaine Indentures," in which occurs the name of "Richard Gardyner, sonne of William," which Richard died at an early age, the property passing to the second son, another William, who died in 1597, a person of some position, and Justice of the Peace. The Peckham property passed at his death to his second son Thomas, who was knighted and became lord of the manor of Basing and J.P.

It was this Sir Thomas who was a truly remarkable man, judging by his letters preserved among the State papers. (His dignified epitaph is given above in the account of St. Giles's Church.) Writing to "the Right nobl Lord the Lord Vicount Dorchester," from "Basing, in Peckham, Sept. 13, 1629," he "sends your Loppe 8

melons, 12 figs and 22 pers, and Carnelia Cheris, all which are the best and most fruits I have or can com by that ar good." In another letter, to King Charles I, who had sent him "a fat venison in melon time," he says he is sending to the Court, in return, "fower melons," which he hopes "will proove well." In spite of this pleasant exchange of amenities—or perhaps because the melons disagreed with the royal stomach—poor old Sir Thomas was summoned to appear before the Court of Star Chamber in the following year 1630; but he seems to have successfully pleaded his "infermyties," as excuse for non-appearance before that dreaded council of inquisition, in a letter of November 22, 1630. In another letter, to the Earl of Suffolk, in the same month, the poor old man pleads: "I received a warrant by a messenger from your Loppe and other Lords of his Maties privie counsell commanding me to apere at the counsell chamber, and to answer unto such makers as shuld be objected aganest me, wherein I shall be most willing to obeye in all things according to my duty and obedienc unto his Matie and your Loppes commands, as knowing no cause wherein I have offended, but having infirmities that I cannot gooe from home and eather on horseback or coch (coach) I voyde blood and am troubled with the stone, the which maketh me at this tyme to be bould to acquaint your Loppe therewith, humbly praying your nobl Loppes favour that if ther be no nessesetie for my aparence I may be spared untell God shall make me more habl to performe your Loppes command. . . ."

But in this same November of 1630 Sir Thomas Gardyner wrote another very singular letter to King Charles which supplies us with the cause for his summons to appear before the Council. He addresses his petition to "Your Royal Gracious Matie," regrets his bodily infirmity will not permit him to appear before the Council, and proceeds to long particulars as to his family, with full

details as to several of his children. He continues—and here we are told the reason for his being summoned to appear before the Court of Star Chamber, and also the connection of the Gardyners with Sir Henry Mainwaring: Sir Henry, by the way, was Lieutenant of the Castle at Dover, and received the Ambassador Gondomar there on March 5, 1620, when the projected Spanish marriage of Charles was in contemplation: “And when the time came that I should bestow my daughters in marriage, and conceaunge that all hopes was frustrate for money by my Son, then I was driven for to lessen my Estate, and to sell Lands for my daughters’ portions, and I gave unto Three of them Two thousand and Three hundred pounds, besides the Charges and their Rayment in Mariage. But my yongest Daughter, which is the ffourth (whoe your Maiesty did once vouchsafe to see at my house and King James often*), shee, without my consent or knowledge, shee mounted upp to Topp of Powles, the nearer to Heaven, for to shewe God there howe wise she was in her Actions, and there shee was maried unto Sir Henry Maynwaringe, and yet she was not there taken upp into heaven, but came downe againe upon Earth, here further to trouble mee before I die, although the greate Care and Charge I had in breedinge her upp did not deserve such disobedience.” His long petition is signed by “Your Maties Humblest Vassell, T. Gardyner.”

It is not to be doubted that this curious story is to be taken quite literally. Sir Thomas is writing not to a crony of his own, but to King Charles I. By the “Topp of Powles” he means either the roof of St. Paul’s Cathedral, or, more probably, the roof of the Tower, which was of lead and nearly flat, after the destruction by lightning in 1561 of the great lead-covered spire. One

* Here we have a distinct record, not before quoted, that King Charles I paid a visit to Basing Manor-house, Peckham, and perhaps also James I.

wonders how a clergyman could be induced to marry the couple in such a place.

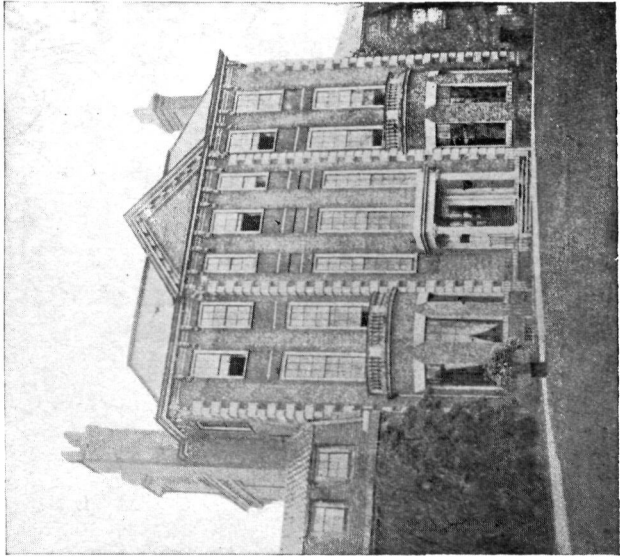
Sir Thomas Gardiner was buried on August 13, 1632, as we learn from the register.

Many other old houses besides Basings survived till lately, and one or two still remain in Peckham, including some very picturesque timber cottages facing the upper part of Peckham Rye.

The manor of Uvedales, Dovedales (or d'Ovedales) corrupted into Dowdales, Dowlas, etc., etc., comprising about 90 acres, took its name from the ancient family of the Ovedales or Uvedales, whose history has been very fully set forth in *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, Vol. III (p. 63, *et seq.*), by the late Granville Leveson Gower, Esq., M.P., F.S.A., who inherited their old house and estates at Titsey, Surrey. Hugo Malherbbe de Tacolneston, son of Hamel, or Hameline, appears in Norfolk in 1161 as the holder of one knight's fee in Tacolneston, Norfolk, of Dover Castle. There were in all, in the manor of Tacolneston, three knights' fees, which were held of the honour of Dover, of the Fitzwalters, as of their manor of Hemenhall. Hugh, son of Hamel, was succeeded by Reginald Ovedale de Uvedale, or Dovedale, and John, his brother. This John de Ovedale, or Uvedale, was probably the son of Hugh de Ovedale of Tacolneston, and became possessed of Titsey by marriage with Isabel Etton, daughter and heiress of Gilbert de Etton by Alice de Tichesey (or Titsey), his wife, in 1297. Soon afterwards, in an inquisition taken at Bletchingly on May 28, 1306, upon the death of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, it is stated that John de Ovedale and John de Horne held of the said Gilbert the manor of Titsey, and certain lands and rents in Camberwell of the yearly value of thirty pounds. These lands in Camberwell remained with the Uvedale family till 1651. The manor no longer exists, but the name, corrupted into Dowlas, survived into the

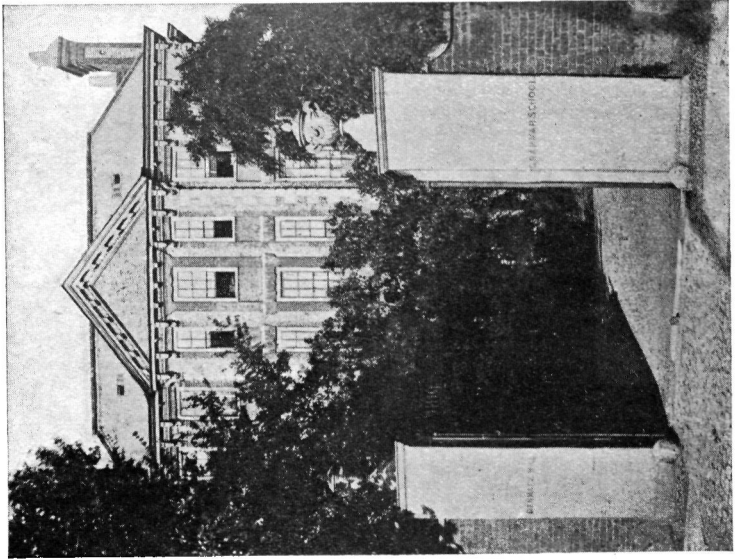
nineteenth century in Dowlas Common and Dowlas Lane (now Dowlas Street), Southampton Street, Camberwell, or Rainbow Lane, as it is called in Rocque's map.

Denmark Hill, now an important and wide thoroughfare, debouches southward from Camberwell Green. The lower part, anciently the High Street, used to be continuous with what is now called the Camberwell Road (Camberwell New Road being a modern thoroughfare), and it contained till recently numerous old houses. The Marquis of Northampton had a town house on the western side, the remains of which, occupied by Mr. Pearson, upholsterer, were pulled down about 1908. It had an old bowling-alley in the rear, and the Northampton crest, a lion rampant, figured on doorplates, etc. Possibly the Golden Lion opposite, now a music-hall, had some connection with this family. There used to be a row of Queen Anne houses, with tiled roofs and pretty little circular-headed windows, to the northward of Northampton House, all turned into shops. Only one survives (Curtis & Hanne, fishmongers), now stuccoed over, and its roof slated, with an old lead rain-water pipe. There was a similar row on the opposite side, southward of the Golden Lion, of which one, much modernised, remains: the omnibus yard has been cut through the site of the others. Northward again, on this eastern side, is a large butcher's shop with a portico over the pavement, and abutting on this was a row of very old cottages only pulled down in 1916, which were left in 1626 by Sir Edmund Bowyer for the poor of Camberwell. The demolition revealed some very massive Tudor chimney-stacks and a heavy oak breast-summer to what had been a gable-end of fifteenth or sixteenth century date. On this same side of the way is still a very ancient cottage, disguised by a stucco front and parapet, but preserving a steep-pitched hipped roof and an old brick chimney-stack. It may well be of fifteenth or early sixteenth century date. Adjoining is a low building, once



EAST FRONT.

(p. 13.)



WEST FRONT.

HOUSE FORMERLY ON DENMARK HILL.

the cage or village pound, and bearing the inscription "The Cage" in an old water-colour view now in the Camberwell Public Library. A narrow passage separates this from a modern tavern called the Joiners' Arms, shown in the same view as a picturesque timber and weather-boarded structure, with a tiled roof and a horse-trough—which survived till lately—in front.

Passing southward, on this eastern side of Denmark Hill, where are now the most sordid and commonplace shops and streets (Selborne and Daneville Roads), there used to be, until about 1875, a long stretch of old brick boundary wall, screening a nobly proportioned mansion known as Great Denmark Hall—latterly the Denmark Hill Grammar School, designed in the grand manner of the seventeenth century. Although the earliest documents relating to it have not been preserved, there is good reason to believe that a much more ancient house stood on the site, and the house pulled down in the 'seventies must have been over two hundred years old, as certain papers show that it changed hands in 1656, when Nicholas Deloës, citizen and merchant tailor, let it to one William Mollett.* Probably it was then comparatively newly built. It was of white Suffolk bricks, with red brick dressings and stone quoins, with old grey slate roofs; and both the west front to Denmark Hill and the east front were alike in their main features, as will be seen from the accompanying illustrations, reproduced by the courtesy of Alderman Whitworth St. Cedd, from photographs in his possession.

The house was tall, almost to gauntness, and had a projecting bay in both fronts, finished with a steep pediment flanked by a slated roof of the same steep pitch. Both the pediment and the main wall had a rich modillion cornice with carved cantilever brackets. The windows of the west front were set in a slightly projecting frame of

* With nine acres of meadow and pasture land.

narrow red bricks, finely jointed, the heads of the centre window in each storey, which were wider than those right and left, being cut to a flat ogee shape. The window frames were all old sashes, but originally were probably of casement form, with flat frames and oblong leaded panes. Some more recent bay windows and other additions had been made in the rear at various dates in the eighteenth century. In its latter years the house had declined somewhat from its ancient glories, but it remained essentially unspoilt to the last. Before its demolition, Queen Alexandra, with a carriage full of Danish Royalties, came to see it, on account of the tradition (properly belonging to another house) that Prince George of Denmark, Consort to Queen Anne, used it as a shooting-box. From the remarkable resemblance in design of this fine house to the Wandsworth Manor-house, pulled down about 1890, which is supposed to have been designed by Sir Christopher Wren, it is possible that it really dated from later in the seventeenth century.

This house had a fine oak staircase, and on the walls of the hall and stairs were paintings of the Rape of the Sabines and the Judgment of Paris. Venus and her competitors for the apple had outraged the proprieties of a nineteenth century Mrs. Grundy, who had caused ludicrously inappropriate skirts to be painted over their fair forms; but either because the lady realised her mistake when she had gone so far, or because (which seems more likely) she was baffled by the problem of an expensive scaffold, there had been left untouched a painting on the ceiling of Mars and Venus caught in the net placed round their bed by Vulcan, the husband of Venus. In this painting the celestial gods were depicted laughing immoderately at the trying position in which the unfortunate couple were placed.

A Mr. John Perkins, who owned the house during part of the eighteenth century, and was a partner in the famous

Southwark Brewery of Barclay & Perkins, often entertained here the great Dr. Samuel Johnson, who, as is well known, had a practical interest in the brewery. A shaded walk in the grounds used to be known as "Johnson's Walk."*

Going southward on this same side is a block of houses with stuccoed fronts, lately modernised, dating from about 1700. There used to be good panelling in the interiors.

All along this part of Denmark Hill one remembers groups of old limes dotted about on the cobbled and flagged footpaths. Several very fine elms still remain within the front gardens all up the hill. In Grove Lane also were some ancient elms and hedges of thorn. One elm alone remains, standing on the pavement. The thorn hedges of Dog-Kennel Hill disappeared in 1905, when this narrow countrified lane was widened for the electric trams.

Bounded by Love Walk, an ancient Lovers' Lane on this side to the northward, and stretching up the hill to the ridge now called Champion Hill, was the beautiful park of the De Crespigny family (Champion being one

* Personally I have always imagined that this was the house described by Dickens as belonging to the wealthy brass and copper founder, where Tom Pinch's sister was governess to the "Syrup" (as Mrs. Todgers termed the unpleasant child of the metal magnate), where also Mr. Pecksniff conveyed his amiable daughters and Mrs. Todgers in a one-horse fly, and descanted upon the architectural beauties of the house, until ignominiously ejected by the exasperated proprietor. It will be remembered by those who know their "Martin Chuzzlewit" that the celebrated architect drew the attention of his daughters to "the airy construction of the cornice of the roof, where it sweeps round the southern angle of the building." The novelist speaks of "the great front gate, and its great bell, whose handle was in itself a note of admiration": also of the "great lodge" within, "which, being close to the house, rather spoilt the look-out certainly, but made the look-in tremendous." The "great gate" between two massive piers crowned by elegant vases remained to the last, but the "great lodge" must, I think, have been imagined by the novelist, to add point and piquancy to his description.

of their names), who settled in England after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Early in the eighteenth century they migrated from Marylebone* to Denmark Hill, and Champion Lodge, where later (1804) the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV, and other distinguished guests were entertained, was built; on the lead rain-water heads, and on some fine wrought-iron ore of the gates before the west front were the initials C. C. and the date 1717, many times repeated, the family arms and crest entwined with graceful scrollwork. The house was latterly an uninteresting stuccoed building. The site of the house and grounds, which enclosed some 30 acres, was largely built over soon after 1840, and the only visible relics are a length of old brown brick boundary wall, of considerable height and thickness, along Love Walk, and a magnificent cedar in a garden on Denmark Hill, one of a pair standing together, of which the fellow remained till about 1879. There seems to have been in the shrubbery near the hill-crest one of that class of artificialities our ancestors delighted in, and which strike us so oddly in these different days—a grotto dedicated to Contemplation, at the entrance to which Lady de Crespigny, wife of Sir Claude, the first baronet, had placed “some elegant and appropriate verses.” This lady, who married at the early age of sixteen, and was something of a poetess, wrote “Letters to a Son” and a novel.

Many of the fine elms, horse-chestnuts, sycamores, acacias, cedars, and a fine specimen of the ilex or evergreen oak that are scattered about in the gardens on Champion Hill are relics of the beautifully timbered grounds of the great house. The private road known as Champion Hill is still managed by a committee of residents, and the minute-books go back over a century.

* There are memorials to the De Crespignys in the Churchyard of St. Marylebone, and more recent ones in St. Giles's, Camberwell, beneath which is a vault appropriated to the family, who now reside near Maldon, Essex.